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DRAMA

A MONTHLY RECORD OF THE THEATRE
IN TOWN AND COUNTRY
AT HOME & ABROAD



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DRAMA

VOL II

OCTOBER MCMXXXII

NUMBER I

 THE JOURNAL OF THE BRITISH DRAMA LEAGUE

PLAYS OF THE MONTH

By E. A. Baughan

SINCE the last review of the plays of the month there was an unusual halt in the activities of the London Theatres. From June 23rd, when "Fanfare" was produced at the Prince Edward Theatre and ran for only a few nights, there was but little new to be seen. "Fanfare" itself has since been resuscitated at the Alhambra under the title of "Over the Page." "Richard of Bordeaux" produced on a Sunday night (June 26th) at the New Theatre is a not uninteresting pageant of the life and character of Richard II. and was memorable for the acting of John Gielgud. "Intimate Relations" at the Little Theatre (June 27th) and "Pride of the Regiment" (July 6th) do not call for comment. There was nothing else in July.

Bernard Shaw's "Too True to be Good," at the Malvern Festival on August 6th and afterwards performed at the Birmingham Repertory Theatre on August 22nd and at the New Theatre here on September 13th, deserves the pride of place in this review. It will not be necessary to criticise this "discussion" in detail, for every London critic dealt exhaustively with it at the time of its production at Malvern.

But I would like to say this: in spite of the characteristic Shavian puerilities of humour and of jokes so bad that only a genius could be excused for making them, "Too True to be Good" has the sincerity of a morality play. I think Shaw is a little behind the times. The younger generation is not afraid of the naked exposure of our souls. The pre-war civilisation is in ruins but there is now a greater honesty of outlook, and if they can, the younger generation mean to build something finer and more durable on the old sites.

Bernard Shaw's modern "Ecclesiastes" takes no account of this spiritual renaissance. His young woman, who discovers that mere freedom is not enough, is not a good example of modern youth. She desires to found a convent for rich young women who can learn to stand alone and yet not deny the calls of life. His Sergeant, a disillusioned student of Bunyan and the Bible, has the root of the matter in him.

The play, it seems to me, is marred by making the Burglar-Parson its chief figure. He has really nothing to add to the discussions, for he is merely a rhetorical preacher. The rest are Shaw's usual inversions of conventional characters—a colonel who is a painter in water-colours, a private who has the initiative of a general and so on.

Nevertheless, this is a play which stands head and shoulders above the other new productions of the last two months. It does deal with big ideas, and for the most part wittily. I do wish, however, that the author had checked the garrulity of his characters. They have run away with him.

"The Firebird" at the Playhouse (August 25th) has given Gladys Cooper a fine part to play and she has deserved the praise of the critics. But I am not at all sure that she has expressed all the possibilities of the mother who accused herself of infidelity and even of murder to shield her daughter. The Hungarian author, Lajos Zilahy, knows his theatre, and has made the most of the familiar scene of the husband gradually cornering his wife until she speaks the "truth." But the "truth" she confesses is not the truth, and Gladys Cooper, it seemed to me, acted as if it were.

PLAYS OF THE MONTH

It might very well be that the original author (the play has been adapted by Jeffrey Dell) intended his play to be in some sort a satire of the old-fashioned melodramatic view of life. Because when the daughter confesses she laughs her mother's old-fashioned ideas to scorn. The girl had not shot her actor lover because he had thrown her over. On the contrary she had tired of him, and the shooting was a mere accident due to her attempting to take away his revolver. All the mother's traditional heroics had gone for nothing. The daughter, very cleverly played by Antoinette Cellier, knocks the bottom out of the melodrama. This last act does not join neatly to the other two. I fancy Gladys Cooper was a trifle too realistic in her confessions.

Philip Leaver, whose "To-morrow will be Friday," at the Haymarket (August 23rd) and "The Way to the Stars" at Wyndham's (September 6th) have brought a new playwright to our notice, is obsessed with the idea that modern comedy must be a series of "wise-cracks." He has a sense of the theatre, but he must cease being so clever. Marie Tempest is the mainstay of "To-morrow will be Friday." Leslie Banks made his return to the stage in the latter play and he and Francis Lister and Joyce Kennedy made the most of the usual triangular scene. Gwen Ffrangcon-Davies appeared as an old outspoken woman.

In "Behold, we Live," at St. James's Theatre (August 16th) John van Druten has tried to spin out a simple and not unaffecting love story of an ill-used wife who falls in love with a middle-aged man and lives with him by tacking on an unnecessary tragedy at the end. Like all this dramatists' work, "Behold, we Live" is inspired by real sympathy with life, but it is not one of his best plays.

"Orders are Orders" at the Shaftesbury (August 9th) is typical of the humour of Ian Hay and Anthony Armstrong of "Punch." "The Night of the Garter" at the Strand Theatre (August 31st) is farce of whirlwind rapidity revolving round the suave rotundity of Sydney Howard. He is really a great comedian. "Fifty-Fifty" at the Aldwych (September 5th) is a revised version of H. F. Maltby's adaption of Louis Verneuil's "Athais" which the Repertory Players originally produced. It is not as funny as the home-made Aldwych farces, but it enables Ralph Lynn to show that he can act straight comedy, but luckily for his admirers it is only for one act.

AGREEMENT WITH THE SCOTTISH COMMUNITY DRAMA ASSOCIATION

We are glad to be able to announce that as the result of negotiation a settlement has been reached which will maintain the entry of Scottish Teams in the National Festival of Community Drama, and meet, we hope, satisfactorily, the difficulties encountered by the Scottish Community Drama Association in administering the Festival rules as heretofore.

On the basis of the affiliation of the S.C.D.A. to the League, the agreement now reached provides for a conjoint Festival in Scotland and for two categories of entry, viz. :—

Category A.—Scottish Festival—Teams entering in this category will be eligible to proceed to the Scottish final festival only, and need not be affiliated to the British Drama League.

Category B.—National Festival—Teams entering in this category will be eligible to proceed from the Scottish to the National final festival in London, and must be affiliated to the British Drama League. The team in this category adjudged best at the Scottish final festival will perform at the National final in London.

In both categories the S.C.D.A. membership fee will be 10s. 6d., and the entry fee 10s. 6d., but in category B the entering teams will require in addition to affiliate to the League at a fee of one guinea. The expenses of adjudication at the Scottish final will now be borne by the S.C.D.A., and not, as formerly, by the British Drama League.

The official recognition by the League of the S.C.D.A. as an independent and autonomous organisation operating in Scotland is also agreed to, and (as in the case of the English Festival Areas) the S.C.D.A. as a body has been accorded the right to elect a representative to the League Council. A second Scottish representative will be nominated by ballot of League members and affiliated societies in Scotland. The S.C.D.A. will continue to be represented on the National Festival Committee.

A NEW MOVEMENT IN HOLLAND

By Theodoor Weevers, L.Docts.

Lecturer in Dutch at Bedford College, London

THE rise of a serious amateur drama after the great war is not a phenomenon limited to England; similar movements have sprung up in other countries, and it is interesting to note how in each case the form which such a movement has taken is typical of the national culture of which it forms part. In Holland religious and political ideals have always taken a firmer hold on the nation than artistic ones, and it is therefore not strange that the Dutch Community Drama, which originated in the Youth Movement, came into being not as a dramatic movement but as a religious one. To the different religious and political sections of the nation who practice it, it is primarily a means of self-expression. The actors by their playing respond in common to the problems raised in them by life. Hence to them the artistic value of their plays is of secondary importance; their chief concern is that the play shall express the view of life which they hold as a community.

It is of course very unusual for such a group to find an existing play in which the ideal that animates them is already expressed. So it was not long before attempts were made by them to write the kind of plays for which they felt a need. Those plays soon took the form of choric drama, because the medium of choral speech is best suited to express communal fervour, and will even unite what was at first merely a group of individuals having certain ideas in common into an organic whole.

In recent years several plays of this kind have come into existence in Holland, some of which have been printed, so that it would be possible to give brief descriptions of several pieces as they appear to a reader. In this way however their real character would not be realised. For the typical Dutch community play seldom has great merit as literature, it only becomes a living, valuable thing when acted by the community in which it came to life. Therefore rather than give short summaries of a number of these plays I will describe the way in which one particular community play, the choric drama "Kinderen van dezen Tijd" (Children of our Time)

came into existence, and proceed to give a full account of its first performance. It will then appear that the production of a community play by the group in which it originated is not so much a dramatic event as an act of worship.

In 1930 the Modernist Student Christian Movement in Holland wanted to celebrate its 15th Foundation Day by producing a play embodying their common attitude to life which may be described as a form of Christian socialism. As they found no play suitable for their purpose they decided to draw up an outline of a group-play in choric form, and to ask Mevrouw H. Roland Holst, one of our greatest poets living, if she would be willing to write the play for them. The poet answered that she would venture on the experiment, which was an act of great self-abnegation on her part, for having studied the present state of dramatic art when writing a treatise on the conditions that must be fulfilled before a revival of the drama can come about, she knew that this experiment could only result in a very imperfect work. Yet she accepted, thereby living up to her own words:

"For we are not the builders of the temple,
We are but workmen carrying the stones.

Clad in the coarse array
Of our weak scanty deeds we shall proceed;
We shall acknowledge all their poverty
Lifting our heads in pride, in this rejoicing
That they of greater things will be the seed."

The outline was drawn up by the committee of the Movement and discussed with Mevrouw Roland Holst. She wrote the play in a few months' time and it was read in a meeting, where the committee once more discussed their thoughts with the poet, and suggested alterations. She accepted the idea and the solution from the students, and she complied with their wish that it should be a choric group-play. The way in which she worked out the plot however was entirely hers. Later on rearrangements were made by the producer, Abraham van der Vies, an actor and choreo-

A NEW MOVEMENT IN HOLLAND

grapher, which greatly enhanced the dramatic effect of the play. A property master and stage carpenter was found in the architect Dirk van der Poel. They were the only outsiders; the cast of sixty players, including the soloists, consisted entirely of S.C.M. members, as well as the whole producing staff, composed of technical students from Delft. Under van der Poel's direction they built the stage-setting as designed by Van der Vies.

It is a platform stage intended to be used in a concert hall. There is no curtain, no footlights; it is an open stage with steps down into the auditorium. Thereby the unity of the audience and the players is symbolised; the players mount the steps after walking up through the auditorium, for they are the delegation from among the audience that is going to give shape to their common thoughts. The stage setting is not "scenery"; it represents nothing in particular, it is meant to be a simple and appropriate basis on which to group the actors, and no more. It consists of a wooden "bridge" and two semi-circular flights of steps leading up to it; these enclose a clear space in the middle. The background is an arras made of brown hessian. It contains panels, the colour of which may be shifted, as they are coloured rolling blinds, sometimes red and yellow, sometimes red, brown and grey, sometimes blue and grey. By this device different moods are suggested. The first rehearsals were painful, as none of the players had had any previous practice in choral speaking, but soon the expression in unison of their common thoughts proved such a thrilling experience that they grew into an enthusiastic community. Thus the play became an organic whole, and the performance before five hundred members of the S.C.M. assembled for the festival who all knew the play, the expression of their view of life, was a thing never to be forgotten. There was no barrier between the players and the audience, they had become one community, one congregation. The magic of religious drama had gripped and united them. The play, it is true, is very unequal as a work of art. Its free verse rises into true poetry in several passages; on the whole however it is of a rhetorical nature. But then it could hardly have been a great work, for it was an entirely new departure for which the way had not been prepared.

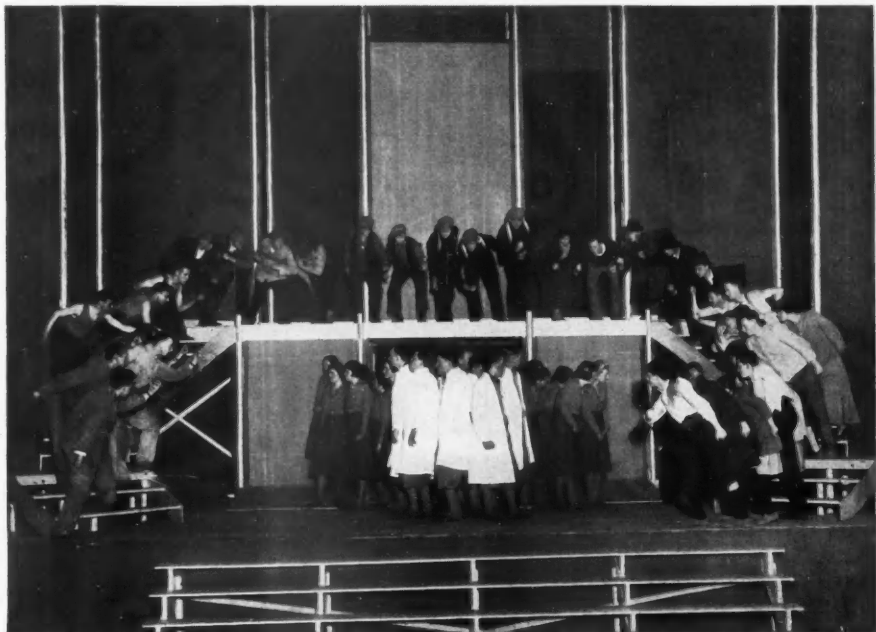
As a mass play however it is very effective and even impressive.

It is interesting to compare it with Ernst Toller's *Masse-Mensch*, to which it bears some resemblance. This has been called a group play, although it is that only in so far as several crowds are among the characters that influence the protagonists. The real drama is concentrated in the characters of "The Woman" and "The Husband"; they change, whereas the character of each group remains fixed.

"Children of our Time" is a mass play in a deeper sense. In the first place the soloists are not individuals but representatives of different tendencies in the group. The play may be called a modern morality. Secondly, and this is of even greater importance: the central fact of the drama: the change in the view of life of the "Children of our Time" happens, not in these soloists, but in the choir itself. In the *peripeteia*, the group as a whole is fighting an internal struggle; it is an organism that changes and develops.

The play opens with the appearance on the "bridge" of the Spirits of Advice and of Pity, who say a prayer to God that he may have pity on the children of our time, and preserve them from being ruined by their short-sighted rationalism and their love of pleasure.

Then the chorus of the "Children of our Time" young men and women dressed in sports costumes, enter through the auditorium and mount the steps of the stage. Their movements while speaking are limited to an occasional step forward or backward and a gesture of the hands. They begin to speak in unison; in some passages the choir is divided into two or four antiphonal groups. The soloists join in their movements and speeches; it is only when they deliver their solo passages that they make a forward step. In this way the "Children" utter their belief in a rationalistic way of life: "We do not trust to our emotions; we rely on reason; we no longer worship a God, and the brotherhood of men is a chimerical illusion. We want to be free, to experience the joys of life regardless of conventions; we want power over other men." Peter and Mary, the two representatives of modern youth, "take each other to enjoy themselves," wanting the pleasures of love without its responsibilities. With them, all the "Children" boldly abjure the old code of morality and go off together into the chaotic life of the modern town,



SCENE FROM "CHILDREN OF OUR TIME"
AS PERFORMED AT ARNHEM ON A STAGE
DESIGNED BY ABRAHAM VAN DER VIES,
AND BUILT UNDER THE DIRECTION OF
DIRK VAN DER POEL.



SOUVENIR OF MISS EDITH EVANS AS
IRELA IN "EVENSONG" AT THE
QUEEN'S THEATRE. FROM A
DRAWING BY VERONICA HAIGH.

A NEW MOVEMENT IN HOLLAND

to lose their way there. They march past the Spirits, heedless of their warnings, and pass under the bridge. The first act is finished.

When the stage is lighted again the "Children" appear dressed in white laboratory coats, as the Chorus of the Arrogant and Ambitious, the naive rationalists who believe that Science, which has been the means of the "splendid progress of mankind" will do away with all existing evils. They are proud of their absolute control over men and things: "We have tamed nature and explained its mysteries; we have adapted man to the machine: Reason rules the world." Among them is *Roger*, the personification of the short-sighted view that it is sufficient for industry to be rational and efficient, and that the happiness of its human instruments is none of its concern.

Then suddenly in a garish green light there appear on the semi-circular stairs the figures of the disinherited of society: the metal-workers, the agricultural labourers, the miners and the unemployed; the factory girls, the pauper children, the down-and-out, the oriental coolies; slowly, with heavy thudding gait and bent heads they descend the steps, then rising from their stooping posture they growl in unison: "What do we live for? Why do we only get the bitters of life? You have forgotten us!" They surround the "Children" threateningly and curse them (photograph): "Red is our hate! red is our vengeance, and it must come soon! Why did you exploit us? For power and money!" Roger protests: "I loved life. I loved my work." But his accusers retort: "You did not love your fellow-men enough." Roger cannot bear their hate, now that he has realised the full extent of the evil he has caused unknowingly. He shoots himself.

A moment of darkness. The "Children" leave the stage. Then the young lovers, Peter and Mary, appear, and bitterly reproach each other. It had not been love that determined their actions; it was the desire to snatch a brief pleasure in those that cannot await their time. They are left disillusioned, feeling old and useless, tired of each other and of life. Mary takes poison and Peter goes away to wander through the world.

It is at this moment that the central scene of the drama in the religious sense sets in. The two catastrophes have unsettled the confidence of the group in the soundness of their philosophy. A feeling of terror and utter

loneliness is expressed by single voices in the choir; some individuals try to escape repentance by refusing to accept any responsibility for the fate of their comrades, but they are silenced by the majority, who see that "their fate may be ours to-morrow." The Spirits of Advice indicate a way out of the crisis:

"Commune with yourselves—remember
what the accusers said.
Commune with yourselves and repent,
for your guilt is great."

The third act is the confession and the rebirth. The "Children" enter with uncovered heads; they turn to the Spirits for help:—

"We are the young people of this time,
that have nothing to live for
We lived for ourselves, for our pleasure.
We heard voices of outcasts; they accused
us and cursed us.
We saw our comrades fly into death. We
feel lost; we seek your help."

And they confess their deepest guilt:

"We forgot that all our privileges
were bought by the toil of the disinherited.
We forgot them because we wanted to
forget,
We saw not, because we would not see;
We closed our ears to their cries;
We turned our backs and refused to help.
Now we are willing to help, but how can
we?"

And the Spirits answer:

"Fight for the coming of justice, to pull
down the walls that now separate men,
fight for the common possession of the
earth. But not by means of power. Power
cannot build the new world, no system can.
Love, patience and faith must be its founda-
tions. Learn to work for a future that you
shall never see."

The "Children" respond to this:

"We are the generation that learnt, though
late, to acknowledge a Power that works
through us; and serving it, we are one,
we go together as comrades."

A NEW MOVEMENT IN HOLLAND

"Children of our Time" was performed to full houses in the four principal cities of Holland, and it made a deep impression on all audiences that witnessed it. That in itself proves that the emotion raised by a community play in a sympathetic audience is of a religious nature. Neither the players nor the audience perceived the defects of the work; its high moral seriousness and the enthusiasm of the players prevented the rise of any æsthetic criticism. At each production and even rehearsal it was evident that the players were moved afresh by the words they were speaking—not so much by their beauty as by their significance to themselves.

Choric drama is the most characteristic form of the Dutch Community Play; it is not the only one however. A number of Nativity and Easter Plays inspired by late mediæval folk plays have been written and performed by sections of religious movements in several towns. They make no attempt at preserving the historical atmosphere: the old legends are modified in order to symbolize modern ideas.* To this there has been one notable exception: the Passion Play produced this year by the inhabitants of Tegelen, a Roman-Catholic village in Limburg, which according to visitors recalled *Oberammergau* by the simple fervour of the acting.

At present the Dutch community play is still in the pre-artistic stage. As such it is of immense value to the contemporaries, but it cannot survive its period. As the mediæval morality however produced the great Middle Dutch drama "Elckerlyc" and its English counterpart "Everyman," so the Dutch community drama may yet give rise to a new form of art. The dramatic movement is there and it has prepared the way for future dramatists. That is an important thing. For as the Dutch poet Albert Verwey once said:

"We artists cannot work in the way we want to if society does not understand us. Ultimately the form of the poet's work is often determined by laymen."

*For this the reader is referred to Dr. Weever's article in "Good Speech," Quarterly Review of the Verse Speaking Fellowship, Vol. II, No. 16. Both that and the present article are founded on a Lecture delivered by the Author to inaugurate his Lectureship in Dutch at Bedford College, London.

THE DRAMA IN LEICESTER

By Horace Twilley

WE in Leicester are looking forward with pleasure to the visit of the British Drama League for the holding of its Annual Conference here.

There can be few industrial centres with finer records of achievement in the field of dramatic art than the City of Leicester. A few facts concerning those individuals and societies whose work has contributed to the present pre-eminent position of Leicester (may one say it?) in the Midlands, will no doubt interest visiting delegates and guests to the Conference.

In reviewing the recent history of amateur effort in this city, pride of place must be given to the Belmont House Society. This society, founded in 1886, was primarily for the purpose of keeping in association the members of a school of this name. Its membership was, and is still, limited in numbers to seventy, and it was customary to produce one play each year. This production was for the entertainment of the members, though later a second performance was given for some charitable object. A high standard of excellence was achieved, and the "atmosphere" of a Belmont House production was, is, and always will be, delightful and intimate. The plays were, as a rule, presented at the Great Meeting in Bond Street, as, in those early days, there was no other stage so good in the city.

The Great Meeting Society is almost as old, and many of our best local players will remember the delight with which they accepted small parts in the Shakespearean and other plays produced there. It is in this building that Leicester's dramatic activity was born.

The most vigorous of the societies, however, has been, without doubt, the West End Adult School. Led by the energetic Herbert Pochin, and his sons, Eric and Roy, this society tackled everything from Greek Tragedy to Revue, from Pageantry to Pantomime. Leicester remembers gratefully Eric Pochin's "Masque of the Months" played to audiences of three thousand in the De Montfort Hall. This was a great spectacle.

THE DRAMA IN LEICESTER

The Wycliffe Players, led by the Rev. F. Seaward Beddow, have for several years occupied a place quite unique in local dramatic effort. In Wycliffe Church, religious plays and the old morality plays have been produced at frequent intervals, and in the adjoining room, the great playwrights are interpreted. Ibsen, Shaw, Glaspell, etc., are presented here under conditions worthy of these authors, for Mr. Beddow has a very complete knowledge of stage-craft. His lighting effects are beautiful, and show him to be a real lover of his work.

Mention must be made of the Martin Players, who, from 1918 to 1930, produced comedies in the Royal Opera House, and by this means raised large sums for local charities. Our most accomplished light comedy actress, Fanny Lorimer, became known through the medium of this society, founded by Mr. Walter Martin.

The Misses Nellie and Kitty Holland have also worked without stint on behalf of the funds of their Church, and in so doing, have given their audiences much joy, for there can be few ladies who have established so pleasant a relationship with their fellow-citizens as have the Misses Holland with the people of Leicester.

There must be at least a hundred other societies in the city, for almost every religious, political, and social institution has its dramatic society to-day. I must deliberately omit to mention several individuals and societies who have contributed to Leicester's cultural life, owing to limitations of space.

The leading society in Leicester to-day is, of course, the Leicester Drama Society. The foundation of this society was the outcome of an address given to the Leicester Rotary Club by Mr. Frank D. Clewlow. A subsequent meeting under the chairmanship of Dr. R. F. Rattray, at which Miss Lena Ashwell was one of the speakers, resulted in the establishment of an all-embracing society in which most of the leading local players co-operated with enthusiasm. Dr. Rattray became the first chairman, and Frank Clewlow the producer. Success was quickly achieved, owing to the fine leadership and the keenness of the members. Three plays each year were presented, but the activity of the society was not limited to these efforts. Readings were arranged for the discovery of new talent, and the understanding of worth-while plays. Lectures were frequent, and the

society was addressed by Mr. William Archer, Sir Barry Jackson, Mr. Crompton Rhodes, Mr. Sutton Vane, Dr. du Garde Peach, Mr. Ivor Brown, and other celebrated persons.

When, to the regret of all the members, Frank Clewlow left the City, the society was faced with the necessity of filling his place. There was no one with professional experience in its ranks, but, under the chairmanship of Mr. Percy Gee, it was decided to continue the work in which the society was engaged, and supply the producers from its own members. Mr. Geoffrey Mead, the new secretary, produced the next play, Ervine's "The Ship," and since that time, at least a dozen producers have been discovered.

The greatest progress has been made under the presidency of Mr. William Bastard, with Mr. Herbert Pochin as chairman of the Executive Committee. These two gentlemen have been supported by a fine body of tireless workers, and as a result, the Leicester Drama Society is now in possession of a very beautiful little theatre, situated in the centre of the city. Twelve plays are presented by the society annually, and in addition, a "Shakespeare Festival Week" has been inaugurated, to take place in April each year.

The aims of the society are not limited to the production of plays. The members engage in activities of other kinds. Play readings, discussions, excursions, and social intercourse make the season a very full and active one. The society also assists the Leicestershire Rural Community Council in its work among the villagers, providing tutors, producers and adjudicators. Its Little Theatre has also been the mecca of those societies competing in the British Drama League Festival.

In a nutshell, the Leicester Drama Society's Little Theatre is the centre of the cultural life of the city and county, and it is with some pride and much joy that it will open the doors to the delegates to the British Drama League Conference of 1932.

LEICESTER CONFERENCE

October 28th—30th

Every member of the League is invited, and every affiliated Society may send two Delegates. Full programme is now obtainable on application to the League.

Application for Tickets must be made before Monday, October 17.

BRITISH DRAMA LEAGUE NOTES



THE JOURNAL OF

THE BRITISH DRAMA LEAGUE INCORPORATING THE VILLAGE DRAMA SOCIETY

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Neither the Editor nor the Drama League as a whole accepts any responsibility for the opinions expressed in signed articles printed in this Journal.

WE regret that the large amount of topical matter necessary to this number of "Drama," prevents us from doing justice to many important events which have occurred in the Dramatic World since our last number. These so-called holiday months are becoming crowded with theatrical enterprises of all kinds. At Stratford-on-Avon, the new theatre has surpassed all hopes that it would prove a unique attraction to Shakespeare lovers. Full houses have been frequent and great enthusiasm has prevailed. With Sir Barry Jackson's Malvern Festival we briefly deal on another page. There, the dramatic performances were delightfully supported by a series of lectures, thrice repeated, by Dr. Boas, Professor Allardyce Nicholl, and Mr. Bonamy Dobree. The Drama League itself conducted successful Schools in Wales, in the Lake District, and (together with the Scottish Community Drama Association) at St. Andrew's. The outstanding productions in London theatres are reviewed elsewhere by Mr. E. A. Baughan, and in this connection we may note the success of Mr. Sydney Carroll's black and white "Twelfth Night" which weathered the heat of August almost to the end, and is still touring.

Dramatic work is to be one of the leisure occupations in the Camps for young unemployed men which are now being started, by voluntary effort with the collaboration of the Ministry of Labour. Active help from members of the League would be greatly appreciated and might take various forms; assistance in production and stage-management, the loan of sets of plays, and so on. As the men will be carefully chosen and will come from all classes, there should be opportunity for casting interesting plays. A group of some twenty or thirty young men whose working hours in the Camp are comparatively short, might prove to be the back-bone of a rural pageant. At the first Camp to be established (Gryth Fyrd, Godshill, near Salisbury) there is already an enthusiastic side of Morris Dancers. It is hoped that Camps may be formed in various localities, and any offers of help should be addressed to Mr. Guy Keeling, 2, Ruskin Close, Meadway, London, N.W.11.

We regret to announce that Miss Margaret Macnamara, desiring leisure for the writing of plays, has tendered her resignation as Schools Organiser for the British Drama League. This was a post which Miss Macnamara herself created six years ago, and since then she has seen the movement grow to such a degree that there is now scarcely a county which has not been brought into touch with it. "Drama Schools" have actually gone some way to solving the problem of amateur training, and Miss Macnamara's part in the initiation of the movement should never be forgotten. A colleague of unswerving loyalty, her fellow workers wish her all success in that career of dramatist which she is about to resume.

Pressure on space has involved transferring to a special four-page supplement several items of League importance. If readers turn to that section of "Drama" they will find not only an announcement concerning two forthcoming Drama Schools in London, but an interesting description of the Drama League Costume Department. We also print the Balance Sheet of the National Festival of Community Drama—of special interest in view of Mr. B. J. Benson's article on Festival Finance which appears in the body of the magazine.

ASPECTS OF THE NATIONAL FESTIVAL OF COMMUNITY DRAMA

I. THE PROBLEM OF FINANCE

By Bernard J. Benson

THE comparatively rapid growth in six years of this Annual Festival, Competition, Experiment-in-Criticism, (call it what you will)—its official recognition by H.M. Government—the attention given to it here and there by the Press—all these may cause us to overlook the economic basis on which the Festival is conducted—the health of which is fundamental to its maintenance. Unfortunately it cannot be said that the event as a whole is yet financially self-supporting, and to tell the truth it shows little sign of becoming so.

The responsible financial bodies at the present time appear to be six in number—the National Committee and the five Area Committees. Of the latter, however, the Scottish has no financial relationship to the National Committee and the Welsh is only in process of formation. There remain the Committees of the three English Areas, each financially autonomous except for an obligation to hand over its net profits in excess of £50 to the National Committee, and a vaguely defined right to look to the National Committee for its losses. The latter again, though not as of right, looks to the Council of the British Drama League for financial aid. Entry fees, now standardised at 10/6, are left with the Areas for disposal. The income of the National Committee is thus limited to such profit as it can make on the National Final, since up to the present it has received no profits from the Areas. It will be seen that the scheme bears signs of improvisation rather than of method and from an accountant's point of view is open to criticism.

The out-of-pocket expenditure borne by the Council of the Drama League under this scheme has averaged some £50 annually, exclusive of the considerable cost of central staff and office expenses purely relevant to the Festival which would otherwise become a first charge on the National Committee. In addition, however, Festivals in many parts of the country have only been made possible—up to 1931 by guarantees or adjudication fees payable by each entrant in addition to

entrance fee—and since 1931 by an annual grant from the Carnegie Fund of approximately £200 passed on to the Festival by the Council of the League. It should perhaps also be mentioned that the Carnegie grant includes a further £50 which is absorbed in Headquarters expenses, and that the National Final, which up to 1931 realised an average profit of some £30 on a separate account, resulted last year in a loss (and in view of the universal price-cutting in London theatres can not, in my opinion, be depended upon in future for any substantial profit). It appears therefore that the margin by which the Festival as a whole failed to support itself in its last season was approximately £300.

A similar grant of £250 has been promised for the next three years only. At the end of that time there is no promise of its continuance by the present donors nor is there any possibility of a similar grant by the Council of the League. A reversion to the levy on each entrant is possible but would in my opinion be so unpopular as to be fatal to the enterprise.

What would any prudent man do in these circumstances? First out of this gratuitous income of the next three years he would endeavour to set aside each year a larger credit to reserve for emergencies, and secondly he would set himself by every kind of experiment within that period to effect a balance of annual income and expenses, knowing clearly that unless he succeeded his enterprise must come to an end.

What does this mean in practice? And first as to expenses. These fall under two heads:—Organisation and Adjudication. Definitely, the latter cannot be reduced. The average fee paid, together with travelling and hotel expenses, is an adequate professional fee but no more. Services inadequately paid for are apt to be inadequately rendered. This payment is a first charge on the enterprise.

The former expense includes Stationery, Printing, Telephone and Telegrams, occasional Travelling Expenses of organisers, and above all Postages. Approximately every affiliated

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Society receives a postal invitation to the Festival and frequently a further reminder, though it may be mentioned that approximately only one in every six replies either "yea" or "nay." In addition there are the countless letters and 'phone calls on points of detail with which every organising Secretary is familiar and the correspondence involved in "clearing up," not to mention the inter-Festival post-bag which afflicts, in particular, Area and Divisional Secretaries. Thus a preliminary Festival extending to several nights may (and does) involve several hundreds of letters and telephone calls and the voluntary worker who bears this burden cannot be expected to be out-of-pocket as well. I make the suggestion that with the "Drama" of October (or with such earlier number as is required in particular districts) circulating as it does to every affiliated Society, should be issued a "Letter of Invitation" to the Festival together with the National Rules and appropriate Area Rules and entry forms, all of which are now circulated to the Divisions and re-posted by them. Apart from this possible saving of postages I am unable to foreshadow any decrease in this item of Organisation.

In respect of both items of expenditure it must be remembered that they will increase automatically with that extension of the Festival throughout the country which we all desire. Unless it can also be ensured that each new Festival and each extension of an existing Festival results in a sufficient increase of takings to supply the minimum profit per night referred to below (and in the case of "first efforts" the probability is against this) it must be realised that extension is likely to increase the financial difficulty rather than the reverse.

Receipts fall also under two main headings, viz., Entry fees and Net Profits of Festivals. Experience has shown that the former tend to be roughly equivalent to the expense of Organisation. It comes then to this, that each Festival, whether Preliminary, Divisional, District or Area, in town or in village, is required, first, to show a net profit equivalent to the expense of its particular adjudication and secondly, let this not be forgotten, to hand over that profit to the body responsible for meeting this expense. This is the minimum condition for solvency. Failure to realise this profit or failure to hand it

over spells the bankruptcy of the enterprise as a whole.

It may seem strange to any person not acquainted with the history of this Festival that retention of profits at any stage of the event by bodies not responsible for the expense of adjudication should be a possibility. Such however was the universal practice during the early years of the Festival and still obtains throughout certain Divisions of the Northern and Western Area as well as in preliminary festivals organised by Rural Community Councils. It is relevant to add that Societies or Divisional groups which thus retain profits are in some cases the same which until 1931 (as previously mentioned) were subject to additional payments over and above the entrance fee. In view of the Carnegie grant of last season, however, these payments were discontinued but net profits are still retained.

The relationship of R.C.C. Festivals to the National Committee is governed by an agreement on the strength of which the Carnegie grant was obtained, consequently nothing further can be said on this score except that each such Festival represents a loss and that at the end of three years this relationship will have to be reviewed. In the other cases I will only add that to a strictly impartial observer there would appear to be a weakness in any National Organisation which permits a variation in practice so detrimental to its finances. I would further add—and this seems to me important—that whilst there is no financial objection to a uniform practice whereby entrants at each stage of the Festival pay fees equivalent to their share of adjudication expenses, leaving the entrants in either case to divide the net profits or share the losses at that stage, it would appear that such a practice tends to encourage a local or sectional attitude. On the other hand it seems that the unquestioning transfer of all profits to the common fund and the knowledge that in the event of an unexpected loss this will be met out of the common fund must tend to encourage the National attitude for which this enterprise stands.

We return then to this vital point of how to make on each Festival a net profit equivalent to Adjudication expenses, i.e., very approximately, taking an average throughout the country, a profit of £5 per night. In the case of Halls with a box-office capacity of £30 or over this is a reasonable possibility. With a

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capacity of less than £20 it is unlikely if not impossible, and though a Festival may be held for one year under the latter conditions, as an experiment and to start a movement, it should not be repeated unless local donations can be obtained to make up the profit required, and then only if there is no alternative hall in which a self-supporting Festival could take place.

Given a sufficient capacity is there any inherent reason why each Festival should not realise, or, allowing for deficiencies here and excesses there, why the Festivals as a whole should not average the modest net profit required? I venture my opinion that there is not. A Festival, as compared with the periodical productions of individual Societies, suffers, it is true, from several disadvantages. It consists of a Triple Bill (or Quadruple Bill)—never a popular "draw." It is not spectacular, and the word "Festival" is not (though it should be and may become so) expressive to the general public of the thing they desire above all—entertainment. Further it suffers from an undefined and potentially very serious liability for travelling expenses, as to which I venture the opinion that travelling expenses of the entrants are properly payable but only to the extent that profits permit after first reserving the requisite "adjudication profit." On the other hand a Festival enjoys important advantages. It has the backing, very commonly, of more than one local Society. It does not spend money on scenery (curtains costing very much less) nor on costumes, wigs, properties, make-up, rehearsal-room or producer, all of which are usual charges against an individual production. Royalties, of course, devolve with approximately equal weight upon both these types of entertainment.

How to secure, then, that Festivals be "well attended," bearing in mind particularly the disadvantages to which I have referred? Briefly I will jot down a few hints tested by experience but without any pretence that they apply in every case, and for conciseness will tabulate them:—

1. Let the publicity matter—posters, day-bills, leaflets—be attractive in design and colour. How often is this neglected! It costs no more, only a little thought, experiment and consultation with the printer. The special Festival poster (D.C. size only, obtainable from Headquarters) goes well with orange or red printing. Use bright colours. This is a Festival. Look like it!

For display of largish posters have rough poster-boards knocked together that can stand or hang in suitable positions. One can not expect tradespeople and others to obliterate their windows. For smaller posters let the distributors take round adhesive paper to fix them with, or use B.O. cards (string attached). Otherwise they are likely to lie on the counter where they are left.

2. Let the programmes be attractive—good print, good paper, attractive colouring, well set out. Let them be informative—a brief foreword on the Festival, its purpose and the way it works—a few notes on each competing society—a summary of the marking scale and "Notes"—the name of the local Committee and stage staff. (volunteers). A poor-looking sheet of buff paper with minimum information sells for 2d. and is thrown away. An attractive, informative programme sells for 3d., 4d., or 6d. and is taken home. Not only may it be more profitable but it is an advertisement for the Festival both at the time and afterwards. We owe it to ourselves to make the audience realise that this is "something different."
3. Rope in the local Mayor, Councillors, the "County," professional men and the rest as "Patrons" of the local Festival. Display their names on the printing matter, and obtain a subscription (say 10s.). In exchange be pleased to give them, say, 2 tickets at 2s. 4d. This provides both support and revenue and they are glad to do it. Make the Festival an event.
4. Let the name and qualifications of the Adjudicator and that he will give public criticism from the stage appear in large type on the printing matter. This is a main part of the "something different." See that he is given a good seat with table and light and is not "talked to" during the intervals. See that he is given a breathing-space after the last play by the interposition of a Chariman's speech of thanks to helpers or the like. Above all let him be told that he has 30—40 minutes to speak. This is not a moment too long. If necessary start at 7.15 p.m. to allow of it. The audience will not mind. It is what they have come for. *See that they get good measure and they will come again.*
5. Study the comfort of the audience. Where seats are hard, cushions can often be obtained on hire and let out for a small sum. Allow no disturbers to enter during a play. Most audiences appreciate chocolates and a small profit can be made.
6. Make full use of the local Press. They are not unwilling. A Festival has several aspects, particularly when the points above-mentioned are observed, that make it quite good "copy." But this may have to be brought home to the Editor by a personal letter or interview in the first place. In exchange for small weekly adverts on your part good publicity paragraphs (preliminary "puffs") will be inserted, say, for three Saturdays before the night. Supply the "copy" for these yourself. This is a fair bargain and worth your while. Moreover it often leads to a fuller "report," hence yet more publicity. Go boldly to the Editor and request a *verbatim* report of the comments up to say, $\frac{1}{2}$ column, 1 column, 2 columns, according to length of Festival. You will probably get it.

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7. Finally, I hope no one will think these points and other similar points are too small or irrelevant to the subject. Taken all together they may make just that difference which we so much desire, the difference between profit and loss.

On a general view it appears that though the present state of financial dependence is serious there is no inherent reason why it should be permanent. As well as its social and educational value the National Festival has an entertainment value for the public which is at present overlooked, neglected or insufficiently developed. The responsibility on Commit-

tees at every stage to make the requisite profit must be made clear to them, and all profit must be ultimately the concern of the National Committee, who must also bear the financial responsibility and prepare the balance sheet of the Festival as a whole. Given these conditions there is every prospect of financial soundness being attained.

It may be advisable, however, for the future of this enterprise that during the next three seasons all Committees, from the National downwards, should give their attention rather to securing the ground under them than to extending the field of their activities.

"HOW TO WRITE BROADCAST PLAYS"

MR. VAL GIELGUD'S BOOK ON RADIO DRAMA

Reviewed by Cyril Wood

IN his book under the above title (Published by Messrs. Hurst & Blackett, price 2s. 6d.) Mr. Val Gielgud, the Production Director of the British Broadcasting Corporation, has managed to compress into a very small compass all the essential hints necessary to aspiring radio dramatists. In these days of too many words and too little sense, one welcomes this terseness. I wonder, though, if his purpose would not perhaps have been slightly better served by a little less rigid economy? My experience is that the most intelligent of playwrights is slow to grasp the essential and vital difference between the stage and the radio play. It takes him a long time to grasp everything that follows the denial of all appeal to the visual sense—the denial of those expressive gestures, and all that telling silent "business" of the stage. The stage dramatist still does not fully appreciate the fact that you do not get a radio play by putting a microphone into a theatre.

One example will illustrate what I mean by the possible danger of Mr. Gielgud's method of verbal economy, which occasionally amounts almost to understatement. On page 21 is contained, in the space of a bare three or four lines what is, perhaps, the most important hint for radio dramatists: "..... the first essential is that he should listen to plays broadcast as often as possible, noting where they fail and where they succeed." Mr. Gielgud knows, probably better than anybody, how (comparatively) few people *hear* Radio plays, much less listen to them! The need for *listening* to Radio Drama should have been, I think, not only the opening statement in the book; it should have been repeated at intervals so that this very obvious fact could not possibly be overlooked.

It would have helped, too, I think, if Mr. Gielgud had stated a little more definitely for whom the book is intended. I do not imagine he was thinking primarily of

that ninety-nine per cent of authors whose work is (and always will be) regularly rejected, not only by the B.B.C. but by every theatre manager and dramatic agent in the country. Presumably Mr. Gielgud is addressing that quite considerable body of able writers, well-known and less-known, whose very ability makes them only too well aware of their ignorance of this new dramatic craft. It is clear to me that Mr. Gielgud wants his book not only to be bought and read, but also to be the means of enlisting literary recruits into the service of broadcasting. Here again at least one reader would have been glad of rather more from Mr. Gielgud. I do not wish to suggest that he should indulge in any emotional extravagances in pleading the cause of radio drama. I think, however, no harm would have been done by a little warmer display of the enthusiasm which I know Mr. Gielgud feels for this intensely interesting new dramatic form.

It may perhaps be surprising that people can still be entirely ignorant of the principles which govern such things as the working of the Dramatic-Control panel, and of the device of "cross-fading." Numerous statements have appeared on this subject, and many photographs of the apparatus have appeared in the "Radio Times" and elsewhere. Nevertheless, the fact remains—writers are largely ignorant of these things, and it would, I think, have been an additional advantage in a book of this kind, if, say, the chapter on "The Elements of the Machine," covering a bare 4½ pages, had been expanded a little more, and had been illustrated by a simple working diagram.

It was a happy thought of the author's to include in his book three examples of what may be called typical Radio plays—that is, plays designed primarily for the medium of broadcasting. Mr. Gielgud as their author has introduced them with becoming modesty, and in a spirit of healthy and frank criticism.



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EPISODE OF THE LANCASHIRE WITCHES
FROM THE LANCASHIRE COTTON
PAGEANT, JULY 1932. PRODUCED BY
EDWARD P. GENN.



By permission of the Western Morning News.

SCENE FROM "A PITIFULL QUEENE."
HENRIETTA MARIA AND THE BABY
"MINETTE." OUTDOOR PLAY AT
THE BISHOP'S PALACE, EXETER,
WRITTEN AND PRODUCED BY MARY
KELLY.

"HOW TO WRITE BROADCAST PLAYS"

A careful study of these examples, side by side with the statement of their governing principles, should well repay any author who is anxious to observe the difference in form between the radio and the stage play. The vital place of good dialogue—in fact the development of the "dialogue" form, as distinct from the "effects" form, of Radio play—might again, with advantage, have been dealt with at greater length.

All these, however, are very minor criticisms of a book which will be valuable both to those who have at-

tempted writing a Radio play, and to those who have still to discover the fascination of a new form of writing. Mr. Gielgud apparently wants, and the B.B.C. needs, to find new dramatists to swell the present slender ranks of authors who will trouble to interest themselves in "the Cinderella of the Drama." That Mr. Gielgud is the person best fitted to state the case for Radio drama there can be no doubt whatever, and one can only hope that he will quickly follow up his admirably compressed statement with a somewhat fuller exposition.

NEWS FROM NORTH AND SOUTH

THE MALVERN FESTIVAL

The fourth Malvern Festival was held this year from August 1st to August 20th. Its series of plays, repeated each week, covered four centuries of English drama, ending with Mr. Bernard Shaw's new play, "Too True to be Good." Under Sir Barry Jackson's direction, with Mr. Shaw as presiding genius, and a setting of lovely and historic country, Malvern can now rank beside the great festivals of the Continent.

On a rainy Bank Holiday, Heywood's "Play of the Weather" proved a topical opening. Here we were at the beginning of English secular drama, with its form of "the debate," and its religious origin was cleverly emphasised by the production. "Ralph Roister Doister," included in the same programme, showed the quick growth of genuine comedy. But in "The Alchemist," performed on the next night, there was no more question of mere attempt or development. With its driving force and full-bodied realism, it held the audience throughout the intricacies of its plot, working up to a climax at the return of the Master of the House. It gave scope, too, for rich characterisation, especially Mr. Ralph Richardson's Face and Mr. Cedric Hardwicke's small yet perfect study of Abel Druggier.

"Oronooko" was a falling-off. This sentimental tragedy hardly merited revival, even as a curiosity, and was only saved by Mr. Richardson's dignity and sincerity in the title part. On the other hand, Fielding's "Tom Thumb the Great" gave us an evening of sheer enjoyment. Its eighteenth century charm and satire were caught in every detail of the production, while, among an excellent cast, Mr. Ernest Thesiger's performance of the king was a peculiarly witty piece of work. On the following night, Dion Boucicault's "London Assurance" made a drowsy interlude before the intellectual stimulus of Mr. Shaw.

"Too True to be Good" is almost as little of a play and as much of a debate as "The Play of the Weather." It is simply a vivid analysis of the post-war mentality with its break-up of old faiths and ideals. The great moment of the evening, unexpectedly, belonged to John Bunyan, seconded by Mr. Shaw's comments and Mr. Richardson's voice. But the whole play is intensely alive and made a fitting conclusion to the Festival. Indeed, the chief impression of a week at Malvern is one of vitality—the sense of the life and growth of English drama, and of its power at the present day.

AUDREY F. LOVBOND.

EXETER PAGEANT

"The Pageant of a Pitifull Queene," by Miss Mary Kelly was performed in the garden of the Bishop's Palace at Exeter on June 17th and 18th and made a handsome profit for local charity, largely owing to the economy with which the B.D.L. Costume Department dressed it.

A Pageant in a city that lives with its history may be an occasion for trembling rather than rejoicing for long or short, history is inseparable from pageantry. But no better period for pageantry could be devised than the Civil Wars, with the Queen's pathetic entry and stirring exit with her loyal troop of horse, through the fresh green of June against the grey towers of the Cathedral. And in Miss Kelly's words history was itself blending tragic pathos with the eternal humorous background of daily life.

The pitifull Queene proved to be neither (as was suggested) Mary Stuart, nor the wife of Charles II., but Henrietta Maria, the devoted wife of Charles I. whose youngest daughter was born in Exeter in June 1644, the title being taken from a contemporary letter. The Prologue was spoken by the City of Exeter herself, in a guise to satisfy the most patriotic citizen, and we were fortunate in a Queen who combined uncanny likeness to Van Dyck's portrait with dramatic power, in two days of cloudless sunshine, and in the exquisite singing of the Cathedral Choir.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS DRAMA LEAGUE

The International Students' Drama League is arranging a tour of French Players in October and November. The plays to be performed are "Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme," "Le Barbier de Seville," "Gringoire," with "Les Precieuses Ridicules" and Fables by La Fontaine. There will be a performance on Tuesday evening October 25th at the Old Vic, when "Le Barbier de Seville" will be produced. The players will also visit Maidstone, Southampton, Bristol, Ipswich, Newcastle, Bolton, Manchester, Uppingham, Birmingham, and Leicester. The tour is being organised by Mr. T. R. Dawes, the secretary of the I.S.D.L. who has organised five previous tours. Further particulars can be obtained from Mr. Dawes at 8, Briar Avenue Green Lane, Streatham, S.W.

NEWS FROM NORTH AND SOUTH

THE GRESHAM SCHOOL PLAY.

The Gresham School made a bold departure this year. Instead of taking one of the more or less "open air" plays of Shakespeare, they decided to stage "Julius Caesar," certainly one of his most "indoor" dramas. The background of this woodland theatre, though merely decorative, supplied a very agreeable setting. It was as though the play was played within curtains of nature's own providing. The whole thing was a triumphant success, thanks to the producer, Mrs. Taylor, who gave us some remarkable "*tableaux*," such as the impressive entry of Caesar with which the play started, the assassination scene and the speeches at the rostrum. There were two amazingly good performances. J. A. Campbell showed us a Caesar who looked every inch a Caesar and spoke like one; his clarion-like speech was a veritable delight to listen to. Equally effective was the Mark Anthony of C. Strachey, a thing of restrained force, deep understanding and real artistic beauty in diction and gesture, that one will long remember. His graceful gestures at the rostrum produced the effect as if some Greek statue had come to life. A worthy "runner-up" was D. E. Field whose impetuous, forthright Cassius found an effective foil in the subdued, and occasionally too subdued, acting of Brutus (Hope-Campbell), who however found himself in the famous quarrel scene. In Casca (T. Graham) we saw the début of a real comic actor. Little Tuckson, as Lucius, with his Eton crop, was a delightfully demure, yet waggish, page. The two boy impersonators of Calpurnia and Portia were very fair to look upon and of the two Portia, when she remembered she was Cato's daughter, was the better. The crowd was admirable, though once or twice they were too prominent. Taken as a whole it was one of the most striking and original school performances one has seen for years.

CLAUDESLEY BRERETON.

TUSMORE

On August 19th and August 22nd the Tusmore Women's Institute gave outdoor performances of "The Well-Maiden," a Play in Two Acts, by B. L. Bowhay.

The plot is based on the legend of the young farmer whose sweetheart quarrels with him, and gives him back his ring. In a fit of temper, he throws it in the well, and swears he will only marry the woman who brings him back his ring. The Spirit of the Well, taking him at his word, appears in woman's shape, and claims his promise.

Ralph Fawcett, the young farmer, and Celandine, the Well-Maiden, were outstanding figures; Anne, the Witch's Grand-daughter, displayed the right simplicity; the Village Belle was charming. Strongly contrasted figures in Rhoda and Ellen, two love-lorn damsels, in the Village Witch and Mistress Fawcett, in Betty and Tom, gave opportunities for character acting, while Meryon, the Gypsy Girl, was an excellent dancer, and gave a notable performance in her outlandish rôle. Despite one or two weak points, the ensemble was surprisingly good.

BOURNEMOUTH LITTLE THEATRE.

The Little Theatre, Bournemouth, which was opened in June last year has now concluded its first season. During the year, the Bournemouth Little Theatre Club has presented nine full-length plays and a one-act play in the Theatre itself and three series of short plays on the stage of the Little Theatre Hall (which is built under the Theatre.) The Club's new season commences in September. The Club presents a play every month for a week. During the remainder of each month the Theatre has been occupied by professional companies. For the coming season, a permanent professional repertory company is being formed which will be under the control of the directors of the Little Theatre Company, and will be augmented by amateur actors drawn from the Little Theatre Club. The Club will continue to give one play each month performed entirely by amateurs.

The Club is anxious to consider for production during the coming season some hitherto unacted plays. Plays should be addressed to the honorary Registrar, Little Theatre, Bournemouth. Aspiring authors should note the following conditions:—

1. All MSS. must be typed and accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope for return.
2. Preference will be given to plays with not more than 12 characters in the proportion of 7 women to 5 men.
3. No plays involving more than one change of scene will be considered. Plays with one scene throughout are preferred.
4. The Honorary Registrar will endeavour to return all MSS., but the Club will not acknowledge any liability in respect of loss of MSS.
5. All plays must be submitted before December 31st, 1932.

BRADFORD

The students of the Shakespearean Class in connection with the Carlton Street Senior Evening Institute, Bradford, gave their 19th Shakespearean production for five nights recently in the Hall of the Technical College.

"Hamlet" was the choice this year and "Another triumph for Mr. and Mrs. W. Greenwood," was the expression of Mr. Thomas Boyce, the Director of Education, at the close of his remarks on the Saturday evening,—"only people in Bradford who keep Shakespeare alive, and with such fine revelation, sincerity, and beauty."

CROYDON

The new Croydon Repertory Theatre opened on September 17th with the first performance of a new play "The Edwardians" adapted by Dorothy Black from V. Sackville-West's Novel.

It is a definite part of their policy to do plays that are worth while, and the first lists includes "Mary Rose," "On the Spot," "John Gabriel Borkmann," "The Guardsman," "Mrs. Moonlight," "The Skin Game," A Shakespeare production, probably Hamlet, and at least two new plays. Mr. Henry Cass is Producer.

MINUTES OF THE XIIIth ANNUAL MEETING OF THE DRAMA LEAGUE

Held on Wednesday, June 29th, at 2.30 p.m., at 8 Adelphi Terrace

The President, Lord Howard de Walden, in the Chair

The Minutes of the last meeting which had been printed in the October 1931 number of "Drama" were taken as read and signed.

Annual Report.

Mr. Whitworth outlined the principal points of the Annual Report which had been printed in the June "Drama." He drew the attention of the members to the loss sustained by the League through the resignation of Mr. Granville-Barker owing to residence abroad. The meeting expressed its desire to confirm the vote of thanks already passed by the Council to Mr. Granville-Barker for his invaluable services to the League since its inauguration. Mr. Whitworth continued that the League had been lucky on obtaining the consent of Lord Esher to become Chairman, and he had already presided at several Council meetings.

Referring to the National Festival Mr. Whitworth stated that the entries had increased satisfactorily and the final Festival held in London on May 23rd had proved a success. He wished to say how much he regretted the death of Sir Donald Maclean, the late Minister of Education, one of whose last public activities had been to give encouragement and approval on behalf of H.M. Government to the work of the League.

Mr. Whitworth further stated that the incorporation of the Village Drama Society had been carried out satisfactorily, and he was glad to report that it had resulted in successful and harmonious working. He wished to draw the attention of members to the Costume Cupboard, through which costumes were available at very low charges.

In conclusion Mr. Whitworth stated that in spite of financial depression and of a therefore rather larger number of resignations, the record of new memberships was maintained, and the League had reason to congratulate itself on having weathered the storm so satisfactorily, a result which was largely owing to the help he had received from Miss Briggs and the other members of the staff.

Dealing with the report on the Library, Dr. Boas stated that the Committee's policy had been not to grudge reasonable expense in buying books on Theatrical Costume, scenery and equipment, and the Committee were anxious to receive suggestions from members of the professional theatre as to books which would be useful to them in their work. He concluded by saying how indebted the Library was to the members of the Library Committee, and also to the devoted labours of Miss Coates and her assistants.

In seconding the adoption of the Annual Report Mr. Holford Knight stated that though he was prevented by his Parliamentary duties from taking such an active part in the League's work as heretofore, he had made a special point of attending this meeting in order to express his appreciation of the importance of the work of the League, and on behalf of the Council he wished to congratulate the societies scattered all

over the country on their splendid work in the cause of the Theatre.

Mr. Kenneth Barnes suggested that the use of the word "Cupboard" in connection with the League's Costume Department was unfortunate and proposed that it should be altered to "Costume Wardrobe, or some such alternative." This was agreed.

The adoption of the Annual Report on being put to the vote was carried unanimously.

Balance Sheet.

Mr. Alec Rea in proposing the adoption of the Balance Sheet stated that the finances of the League were satisfactory, and a definite step had been taken during the year towards the day when the League would be self-supporting. He appealed urgently for new members so that the Council could feel the League was on a sound footing when the Carnegie Trust guarantee against loss ceased in a year's time. Mr. Chatwin seconded the adoption of the Balance Sheet, and the resolution on being put to the vote was passed unanimously.

Election of Council.

The Chairman stated that in accordance with the rules of the League the following members of the Council were due to retire but were eligible for re-election :—

Mr. Harold Ridge, Mr. Lewis Casson, Mr. Fisher White, Miss Elsie Fogerty, Mr. J. W. Turner, Mr. Alec Rea and Mr. Geoffrey Whitworth.

The Chairman also reported that Mrs. Arthur Stallard had nominated Miss Edith Neville as a member of the Council and that as there were only seven vacancies there would be an election. Miss Neville who was present stated that in these circumstances she wished to withdraw her name.

It was then proposed by the Chairman, seconded by Mr. Kenneth Barnes and

RESOLVED :—"That Mr. Ridge, Mr. Casson, Mr. Fisher White, Miss Fogerty, Mr. Turner, Mr. Rea and Mr. Whitworth should be re-elected."

Extra-metropolitan members.

Mr. Whitworth reported that the following representatives had been elected :—

Scotland	Mr. Douglas Robertson
Northumberland, Cumberland, Westmorland, Lancs, Isle of Man	Mr. George O. Sharman
Yorks, Durham	Miss Constance Radford
Hereford, Cheshire, Salop, Staffs, Derby, Notts, Leicester, Rutland ..	Mrs. Nesfield Cookson
Wales	Mr. Haydn Davies
Worcs, Warwick, Berks, Oxon, Northants, Beds ..	Mr. Boughton Chatwin
Lincs, Norfolk, Suffolk, Herts, Hunts, Cambs, Bucks	Mrs Camille Prior
E. Sussex, Kent, Essex ..	Mr. B. J. Benson

MINUTES OF DRAMA LEAGUE ANNUAL MEETING.

W. Sussex, Surrey Hants,
Isle of Wight .. Mrs. Gordon Whitmore
Cornwall, Devon, Somerset,
Dorset, Wilts, Glos .. Miss Carritt

Election of Auditors.

The Chairman proposed, Mr. Kenneth Barnes seconded and it was

RESOLVED:—"That Messrs. Searle, Honeybourne and Co. should be re-elected Auditors for the coming year."

Proposal by Mr. Harold Ridge, seconded by Mr. Alec Rea:—

"That Rule VII (i) of the Rules of the British Drama League should read as follows:—

The election of the additional ten members of the Council representing Provincial Areas shall be carried out in the following way:—Excluding London and Middlesex, five Areas shall be constituted with five Area Committees to be approved by the Council. In every such Area each affiliated organisation and individual member shall be entitled to nominate candidates to serve as members of the Council for that Area. Nominations must be sent to the Secretary of each Area Committee by May 1st. From the candidates so nominated two shall be elected by each Area Committee, but not more than one of these may be a member of the Area Committee."

In speaking on this motion, Mr. Ridge stated that he had felt for some time that the system of election of provincial members was unsatisfactory since in about half the constituencies there was no election, and in some of the others voting was very slack. He put forward this resolution in the hope that a more lively interest might be taken in the election by members.

Mr. Boughton Chatwin proposed an amendment as follows which was seconded by Mr. Fisher White:—

"That Rule VII (i) of the Rules of the British Drama League should read as follows:—

The election of the additional ten members of the Council representing extra-Metropolitan Areas shall be carried out in the following way:—Excluding London and Middlesex, five Areas shall be constituted with five Area Committees to be approved by the Council. Each Area Committee shall have the right to nominate one representative on the Council. A second representative each Area shall be selected by Ballot papers distributed from the offices of the League. Each affiliated organisation and individual member shall be entitled to nominate one candidate. Each affiliated society and individual member to have one vote."

This amendment was accepted by Mr. Ridge. Discussion followed. It was pointed out that the five areas mentioned in the Resolution would be the Festival Areas, and the five Area Committees would probably be the Festival Committees, but the Council

was unwilling to bind itself to appoint the Festival Committees permanently.

Mr. Cheliot of the Unity Players, Liverpool, and Miss Bentley of the Halifax Theatians suggested that the word "approved" should be altered to "recognised" and the resolution, as amended, was then put to the vote and carried.

Proposal for the inclusion of volumes on the Cinema in the British Drama League Library.

Dr. Boas stated that at present the Library Committee was prevented from including books on the Cinema by a resolution passed at a previous Annual General Meeting. From time to time good books on the Cinema were recommended by experts, and Dr. Boas proposed that henceforth a small selection of books bearing on the Cinema might be included in the Library.

Miss Mary Pakington in seconding Dr. Boas' proposal urged that if such books were included they should be kept up to date.

Mrs. W. L. Courtney stated that she believed a Film Society was in existence which possessed a Film Library, and possibly some arrangement might be made for co-operation.

Miss Fogerty spoke against the inclusion of Film Books on the Library.

The Chairman stated that he did not think the League could possibly hope to include a representative collection of such books.

Discussion followed.

Dr. Boas stated that he had no wish to press the matter. He finally proposed the following resolution which was seconded by Mr. Bourne and passed:—

"That this meeting recommends the Library Committee to see in what way the request for film books can best be met in co-operation with other bodies and report."

A suggestion that a rider to the effect that the words "and empowered to add books connected with the Film if they think fit" should be added to the resolution, on being put to the vote, was lost.

Other Business.

Costume Department.

It was recommended that more publicity should be given to the Wardrobe and that a list of dresses should be published.

Author's Fees.

Mr. Benson stated that Messrs. French were increasing the number of their plays on which they were willing to make special terms. Messrs. Pinker also were willing to compromise. Miss Scrutton reported that in this connection Messrs. Deane would consider the size of the Hall and seating capacity. It was recommended that Messrs. French and other Agents should be informed by Societies wherever plays were not performed owing to the high fee charged.

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